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Neustadt, Germany
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OKH PROJECT

7

REPRESENTATION OF INFANTRY INTERESTS

1938 - 1945

by

Erich Jaschke

General der Infanterie

Translator: P.W. LUETZKENDORF
Editor : P. L. MUSCHAMP
Reviewer : Capt N. T. WALKER

HISTORICAL DIVISION
EUROPEAN COMMAND
1952

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EUROPEAN COMMAND
HISTORICAL DIVISION
Foreign Military Studies Branch

21 July 1952

TO : Chief, Foreign Military Studies Branch

SUBJECT: Reviewer's Comments

1. Manuscript P-04lm. entitled "Representation of Infantry Interests, 1938-1945", was reviewed by the undersigned on 18 and 21 July 1952. This document is a portion of OKH Project Number 7.

2. The study was written by General der Infanterie Erich Jaschke in December 1947, and consists of thirty pages in the original German, which has been reduced to 24 pages through translation and editing. It is accompanied by one simple organizational chart. Attention is invited to the fact that the copy of the German typescript at this Division has a portion of page 21 missing (page 16 of the English draft copy), which materially affects the meaning of the passage in question. The original typescript is now at the Office of the Chief of Military History, and will have to be consulted for elucidation of this passage. Insufficient time precludes requesting a translation of this page from that source.

3. The study is concerned with the representation of infantry interests in the top-level headquarters of the German Army during the period immediately prior to and during World War II.

4. Because of the high level organization with which the study is concerned, and the major project of which it is only a portion, it is not felt that it is of any material use to any agency within the European Command. On the other hand, it is extremely lucid and valuable within its proper sphere, and especially when considered in conjunction with the companion pieces of this over-all project, will unquestionably prove valuable to high-level agencies of the United States Army.

5. It is not recommended that this study be reproduced for use in the European Command.

NORMAN T. WALKER
Capt Ord C
Reviewer

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The Author

Erich JASCHKE
General der Infanterie
Date of Birth: 11 May 1890
Place of Birth: Danzig

JASCHKE was assigned as a second lieutenant of infantry in November 1911 and from then until the outbreak of World War I served as an infantry and machine gun platoon commander in Alsace. During World War I he saw active service as a platoon leader, company commander and as a regimental personnel officer.

Remaining in the Army after the war, JASCHKE had reached the rank of colonel by the time World War II broke out and was then serving as an adviser to the Chief Infantry Officer at Army High Command. In 1941, he was promoted Generalmajor and placed in command of a motorized infantry regiment on the East Front. During the further course of the war he remained on the East Front where he was given command of an armored infantry division in 1942 and of a corps in 1943. In January 1943 he was promoted Generalleutnant and in May of the same year General der Infanterie.

On 8 May 1945 the general was taken prisoner by American forces at Alm, near Saalfelden, Tyrol.

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A. The Inspector of Infantry up to the Outbreak of War on September 1, 1939

1. Responsibilities

The Inspector of Infantry represented the interests of the Infantry Branch in the top-level organization of the Army High Command, handling all matters pertaining to that arm. These included organization, arms and equipment, infantry training for all arms, weapons and ammunition production, production of equipment, requests for new developments, home fortifications, mobilization, and the activation of new units.

2. Composition

The office of the Inspector of Infantry consisted of the Inspector himself, a chief of staff, a chief file clerk, an operations officer for organization, training, regulations, and schools, and several specialists. These latter were departmentalized into sections for rifle companies and light infantry weapons, machine gun companies, 20-mm gun and troop air raid protection, motorized infantry, ammunition, press, films and technical literature (also editor of "The German Infantry" magazine), home defense, wartime strength and equipment accounting, and budget and accounting. Directly subordinate to the Inspector were the various schools, consisting of the Infantry School at the Doeberitz Troop Training Ground near Berlin, the Mountain Firing School at Fulpmes in the Tirol, NCO Schools at Potsdam-Eiche, Sigmaringen, and Frankenberg in Silesia, and the Army Air Raid Protection School at Altwarp on the Stettiner Haff. The Infantry Parachute Battalion at Stendal was also directly controlled by this office.

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3. Chain of Command

The Inspector of Infantry was directly under the Army Commander-in-Chief, but his chief of staff also occupied the position of a department chief under the Chief of the General Army Office. The commandants of the schools were directly subordinate to the Inspector, but the specialists were under his chief of staff.

4. Operations

The Inspector of Infantry submitted suggestions to the Chief of the General Army Office, which were based on the evaluation of troop reports, personal impressions from visits to the troops, the study of pertinent German and foreign literature, and the results of trials and tests made at the Infantry School. The Army General Staff specified all objectives in peace and war and ordered their execution through the General Army Office. They were implemented for the infantry through the Inspector's office and reflected in the strength and equipment accounts which he submitted.

To meet all the material and personnel requirements of the infantry units, the Inspector cooperated closely with the other agencies of the Army High Command, as for instance: with the Replacement and Army Affairs Group relative to NCO and EM replacements and troop billeting; with the Army Personnel Office relative to officer matters; with the Cavalry Inspector on the procurement of horses and vehicles; with the Motor Troops Inspector for motorization matters; with the Army Ordnance Office and the Ordnance Inspector concerning the procurement of weapons, equipment, and ammunition; and with the Army Budget Branch of the

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General Army Office relative to budget matters and bills.

Development of Weapons, Equipment, and Ammunition

The Infantry Inspector made suggestions to the General Army Office on the basis of troop experience and the evaluation of pertinent literature. After such suggestions were approved by the Chief of the General Army Office, the Inspector determined the requirements in the tactical or technical field for the development of a new weapon, a piece of equipment, or a type of ammunition, and submitted his findings to the Army Ordnance Office through the General Army Office. Each phase of development was demonstrated at Kummersdorf by the Army Ordnance Office for the benefit of the Infantry Inspector, the agencies of the Wehrmacht High Command taking part in the development, and often by interested industrial engineers as well. If the weapon appeared feasible a few samples were sent for initial simulated field tests at the Doberitz Infantry School. These tests were followed by extensive field trials, and on the basis of test reports, it was decided whether the weapon was ready to be adopted. Approval for the introduction of the weapon was obtained from the Army Commander-in-Chief.

Since each development required time, and since additional time was necessary to begin mass production, planners had to look far ahead to turn out modern weapons. Thorough trials could not always be carried out during the war, and brief field trials had to suffice. In general the Infantry Inspector, in conjunction with the General Staff of the Army, set up a yearly development program for all infantry equipment and

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ammunition.

Production and Requisition

The Infantry Inspector estimated requirements for the peacetime army and those in the event of mobilization covering the production of weapons, equipment, and ammunition, and on the basis of these estimates, requested funds from the Budget Branch and raw material allocations from the General Army Office. In peacetime, requisitions for the current fiscal year were submitted to the Army Ordnance through the General Army Office, but during the war the availability of raw materials rather than of funds was the determining factor in filling these requisitions. Raw material allocations were issued by the Chief of Army Equipment and the Commanding General of the Replacement Army, who controlled monthly material production through their use.

For the most part, new developments occurred in hand weapons, small arms, crew served weapons up to 20 mm, mortars, infantry guns, antitank weapons, bicycles, range finders, prismatic compasses, mountain equipment, winter and skiing equipment, and armorer-artificer equipment for infantry weapons, plus ammunition for the new weapons developed.

The Infantry Inspector received directives for infantry training from the Commander-in-Chief of the Army or the Chief of the Army General Staff. In peacetime the Training Branch of the Army General Staff issued "General Training Directives" to the troops, the infantry portions of which were contributed by the Infantry Inspector's office.

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The Inspector was authorized to visit infantry units at any time after he had obtained permission from the corps commander under whose jurisdiction the units fell. He conducted training and testing exercises dealing with problems such as organization of an infantry regiment, using newly introduced weapons in combat, and cooperation with other branches (Panzer, Artillery, or Luftwaffe). He exercised a decisive influence on infantry training through training regulations and was responsible for drafting equipment manuals, firing manuals for all infantry weapons, and tactical training manuals from the rifle group to the reinforced infantry regiment. This entailed close cooperation with the inspectors of the other arms, particularly in the case of manuals applicable to all branches of the army (for example, basic infantry training, and firing with small arms and light machine guns). The Training Branch checked manuals and memoranda of all branches of the service to insure uniformity of structure and language, and submitted tactical training manuals to the Commander-in-Chief of the Army for approval.

The Motor Troops Inspector, upon request of the Infantry Inspector, established training courses for motor vehicle driving instructors, military motor vehicle specialists, and motor vehicle maintenance sergeants. Members of motorized infantry divisions, the panzerjaeger divisions, and the 20-mm flak battalions were temporarily detached to attend these courses. Close contact was maintained with the Inspector of Signal Troops, who had assumed responsibility for the training of infantry signal platoon leaders at the Justerbog Signal School, and views were exchanged regarding the development of light, portable

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radiotelephone apparatus for rifle companies and for fire directing purposes.

In the sphere of home fortifications, close relations were maintained with the Inspector of Fortifications, and finally the Infantry Inspector placed his fortification specialists at the permanent disposal of the Fortifications Inspector. In addition, the Fortress Engineer Corps received tactical and technical assistance in the planning and construction of fortifications from infantry officers assigned to the various fortress engineer posts. The Infantry Inspector or his assistants inspected these establishments, even to the written fighting instructions inside each battle station, the tactical value of infantry weapons, and technical improvements in firing technique and equipment. Upon mobilization the home fortifications specialist was eliminated from the Infantry Branch, and on March 1, 1943, that of Senior Infantry Officer for Home Fortification with the General Army Office was established. He served directly under the Chief of the General Army Office, and was responsible for approximately the same duties as the home fortification specialist had been responsible for in peacetime.

On behalf of the Public Relations Branch of the Wehrmacht High Command, the Infantry Inspector checked articles for a variety of magazines regarding Infantry matters. The magazine "Die Deutsche Infanterie" (The German Infantry) was edited and issued by the Infantry Inspector's staff.

5. Importance

Through verbal reports to the Army Commander-in-Chief, the Inspector could bring matters to the attention of the proper agencies in

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the Army High Command. Through visits to the troops and through his presence at exercises, the Inspector informed himself of the state of training in infantry units, and the information gathered on these occasions formed the basis for training manuals, for suggestions regarding changes in organization, armament, and equipment, and for the establishment of training courses. Conferences with unit and senior commanders were particularly valuable, and suggestions and desires of the troops were relayed to the proper agencies in the Army High Command. The direct subordination of the Infantry School to the Inspector of Infantry worked out very well, since problems could be resolved quickly through experiments conducted there.

The Doeberitz Infantry School had evolved from the small training staff of the 100,000 man army in keeping with the growth of the Army itself. By 1938 its organization included the command staff, three instruction staffs (during the war a fourth was added), and the infantry instruction regiment. The Command Staff was responsible for the preparation and conduct of all training courses, special trial exercises, tests of weapons, equipment, and ammunition, and cooperation in drafting manuals. Instruction Staff I was charged with training noncommissioned officers as platoon leaders and training assistant instructors for practice firing of all infantry weapons. Instruction Staff I conducted training courses for officers as platoon, company, and battalion commanders (during the war also as regimental commanders). Prior to the outbreak of the war, in view of the shortened courses at the officer candidate school, the

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officer candidates with master sergeant's rank in infantry units were trained as platoon leaders in courses of two to three months' duration. Instruction Staff III trained officers and non-commissioned officers of the motorized infantry divisions. The Infantry Instruction Regiment consisted of the regimental staff, two infantry battalions, one motorized infantry battalion, one infantry gun company, one panzerjaeger company, and one 20-mm flak company.

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B. The Inspector of Infantry and the Infantry Branch After 1 September 1939

At the beginning of the war the Infantry Inspector's office, exclusive of the Inspector himself, developed into the Infantry Branch of the General Army Office. The Inspector was assigned to the Commander-in-Chief of the Replacement Army, where he established a new office.

1. Responsibilities

The Inspector of Infantry's responsibilities were confined to the training of the replacement units for the Infantry, while the responsibilities of the Infantry Branch in the General Army Office equaled these of the Infantry Inspector in peacetime, but extended only to the Replacement Army.

2. Composition

The staff of the Inspector of Infantry consisted only of an assistant and an officer performing office duties. The Infantry Branch for the time being retained the old organization with a branch chief as its head.

3. Chain of Command

The Infantry Inspector was subordinate to the Commander-in-Chief of the Replacement Army, while under him were the senior infantry officers established in 1943 (on the basis of one officer for three military areas) who supervised the training of the infantry replacement units within their districts. The Infantry Branch was subordinate to the Chief of the General Army Office, and the specialists were under the branch chief. All the infantry schools of the Replacement Army were placed under the Chief of the General Army Office, and the Infantry

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Branch issued directives for tests and experiments of all kinds directly to the schools by his order.

4. Operations

The Infantry Inspector

The Infantry Inspector was charged with the supervision of training in the Replacement Army according to directives of the Army High Command and memoranda prepared at the General Army Office, and to correct mistakes in the apportionment of replacements and in the distribution of equipment. To this end, he cooperated with the Deputy Corps Headquarters in the Replacement Army and informed them of his findings during his visits to the troops. With permission of the General Staff of the Army, the Inspector could visit field units at the front to gather impressions and to note the training needs of the infantry replacements, and these trips had the great advantage of showing the training requirements which field duty placed upon the Replacement Army. The Inspector retained these duties until the end of 1944, when he was subordinated to the Chief Infantry Officer in the Army High Command.

As a working staff, the Infantry Branch in the General Army Office was at the disposal of the Inspector of Infantry, and the branch chief periodically informed the Inspector of all important projects. When the post of Chief of Training of the Replacement Army was established in 1943 under the Commander-in-Chief of that army, the Infantry Inspector was subordinated to him as were the infantry schools of the Replacement Army (Infantry School, Mountain Infantry School, and Army Air Raid Protection

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School). The NCO schools had been placed under the Inspector of Training and Education at the beginning of the war.

The Infantry Branch

The Infantry Branch cooperated closely with the Chief Infantry Officer attached to the Army Commander-in-Chief in the preparation of manuals and memoranda, in experiments, tests, and developments, and in requisitioning. It cooperated as a working staff in clerical matters with the Infantry Inspector, and with the Chief of Training of the Replacement Army concerning training principles and service schools. Cooperation was effected with the Army Personnel Office on officer requirements and assignments, with the Replacement Branch of the General Army Officer for replacements, and with the Branch for General Troop Affairs of the General Army Office in respect to NCO and EM affairs. In addition, close contact was maintained with the Ordnance Inspector for supply, equipment, changes and use of captured weapons, with the Fortifications Inspector on the use of infantry weapons in fortified establishments, and with the Clothing Branch of the Army Administration Office on clothing and equipment for infantry troops. Other branches of the General Army Office were not as intimately involved as the above, but cooperation was effected in all necessary cases.

5. Importance

The channels of influence open to the Inspector of Infantry were greatly reduced compared to that which he exercised in peacetime, since his authority was now confined to the training of the Replacement Army.

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His contact with the Field Army and his influence upon training at the infantry schools was lost, and his separation from the Infantry Branch, from which he drew most of his information, was impractical. In the interests of the Infantry in the Replacement Army, it would have been better to retain the Inspector as head of the Infantry Branch, and all infantry schools of the Replacement Army should have been placed under him.

The responsibility of the Infantry Branch was to supply the replacement units with sufficient training personnel and material. The Branch Chief was authorized to visit training units with the permission of the deputy corps headquarters concerned in order to satisfy himself as to the quality of the replacements, the state of their training, and the material situation. Therefore the Infantry Branch, in conjunction with the Army Personnel Office, had to provide suitable instructors, weapons, equipment, and ammunition to the service schools, but these in turn were at the disposal of the Branch for testing and experimenting. In rehabilitating field units, deficiencies noted by technical officers were remedied by drawing from the surplus of other military districts or through direct contact with the Ordnance Inspectorate.

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C. I. The Chief Infantry Officer attached to the Army Commander-in-Chief

During the Poland Campaign it had become evident that representation of the various arms at Army Headquarters would be beneficial. There was no person or agency in the OKH (Army High Command) subordinate to the Army Commander-in-Chief to advise on infantry matters and to represent the field infantry's interests. After the campaign chiefs of arms and services were appointed to represent each arm, and among these, in October 1939, the office of Chief Infantry Officer with the Commander-in-Chief of the Army was established and was physically attached to Army Headquarters.

1. Responsibilities

The Chief Infantry Officer was the head of the infantry of the Field Army, the adviser of the Army Commander-in-Chief in all infantry matters, and the representative of the interests of the infantry at the top army command. It was his responsibility, by remaining in continuous contact with the field infantry, to keep the Commander-in-Chief informed of the experiences, requirements, and desires of the field units with regard to weapons, organization, and equipment, to insure uniform training of the field infantry, and to request development of weapons and equipment.

2. Composition

The staff of the Chief Infantry Officer consisted of the Chief himself, a chief of staff, an adjutant, a chief file clerk, and specialists for rifle companies, machine gun companies and air raid protection, and high-angle guns and antitank defense. After the Western Campaign in 1940, a specialist for motorized infantry was added to the staff. With the

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expansion of the war, the responsibilities of the Chief Infantry Officer grew through the introduction of new weapons and equipment and through increased activation of new formations. The staff was augmented to cope with these responsibilities, and by 1943, specialists had been added for training and manuals, mountain infantry units, bicycle units, and for signal platoons, and the responsibility for organization had been assigned to the high-angle gun specialist.

3. Chain of Command

The Chief Infantry Officer was subordinate to the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and the Chief of the Army General Staff, and his chief of staff was responsible to him alone. The office was not a branch of the General Staff, but a service branch at Army Headquarters, manned only by field unit officers. The Chief Infantry Officer had no authority over infantry units of the Field Army, and could issue directives and orders to the field units only on the authority of his two above-mentioned superiors. The only training unit subordinate to him was the Field Non-commissioned Officer School established in 1942 in Demba, Poland, which was later transferred to Arys, East Prussia. In 1943 the three independent cavalry regiments formed at the Eastern Front were placed under the Chief Infantry Officer.

4. Operations

As infantry adviser of the Army Commander-in-Chief, the Chief Infantry Officer cooperated with all agencies of the Army General Staff and the OKH (Army High Command). Frequent visits by him and his assistants

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to the infantry of the Field Army established close relations with the front troops and the senior commands. Through conferences with the various staff members, personal impressions were gained and the latest experiences in the conduct of battle were gathered, which were compared with reports from other theaters of war and evaluated for the preparation of manuals and memoranda. The requirements of the field units relative to arms, equipment, and training were studied with the appropriate agencies of the General Staff and reported to the Army Commander-in-Chief or the Chief of the General Staff for decision. Evaluations of monthly reports drew a picture of the condition and battle value of various infantry units, and of the needs of all sectors.

Through his position under the Army Commander-in-Chief (or Chief of General Staff of the Army), the Chief Infantry Officer was able to evaluate attitudes of the High Command as they affected the interests of the infantry. A knowledge of the personnel and materiel situation was a prerequisite to making suggestions for reorganizations or new activations, and presupposed close relations with the General Army Office, the Infantry Branch in the General Army Office, and the Army Ordnance Office.

In training matters there was a lively exchange of views with the Training Branch of the General Staff, the chiefs of arms, and the infantry schools. Suggestions received through personal impressions, experience, and battle reports found expression in the form of manuals, memoranda, training hints, and in training designed to send infantrymen to the Field Army who were realistically trained in weapons technique and

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battle conduct. To this end training had to be true-to-life, teaching practical methods adapted to battle situations rather than theoretical concepts. The old peacetime firing drill, for instance, dropped completely into the background in favor of combat fire training with movable targets; aiming under battle conditions and hasty firing were emphasized. This "front line" training was the basis of all manuals and memoranda issued to the infantry, as for instance the "Manual for Practical Fire Training with Rifle, Assault Gun, and Light Machine Gun," the "Short-Term Infantry Training in the Field Army," and the "Assault Platoon of the Rifle Company."

5. Importance

In establishing the positions of chiefs of arms and services with the Army Commander-in-Chief, the intention was initially to provide a representative of each arm who was to be an adviser in all matters of his branch and responsible for its uniform training in the Field Army. Since no facilities were initially available for infantry training purposes, within the Field Army the possibilities in this field were limited at first. Upon the Chief Infantry Officer's request for the establishment of enlisted man officer candidate and company commander schools, the former were set up for each infantry division and the latter for each army, although responsibility for the training of company commanders was later assumed by the Army Service School. The Chief Infantry Officer exercised influence for uniform infantry training by visiting these schools.

His influence increased when the training of battalion commanders was instituted at the Koenigsbrueck training grounds after the Western

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Campaign. The instruction unit for these training courses was drawn from an infantry division (instruction division) transferred there, and to which a special staff had been attached. Commanders of other arms and services (artillery, engineers) also participated in these courses, and when the Chief Infantry Officer visited these schools, he held lectures intended to train the participants in the conduct of battle with combined arms. In 1943 this training was moved to the newly established battalion commander school in Antwerp, and the Chief Infantry Officer was given responsibility for the supervision of the over-all training at the school, which enabled him to exercise even greater influence upon training.

* * *

These were the organs of expression of the Chief Infantry Officer and were addressed to High Command and to the training installations of the infantry as an infantry supplement to the training directives issued by the Training Branch of the General Staff.

II. The Inspector of Infantry and the Infantry Branch in the
General Army Office

The Inspector of Infantry was subordinated to the Commanding General of the Replacement Army, and the Infantry Branch to the General Army Office. The duties and operations of the Inspector and the Infantry

* * *

EDITOR'S NOTE: At this point approximately two lines of text are missing from the German copy of this study at the Foreign Military Studies Branch. These two lines are at the beginning of the second paragraph, about the middle of page 21, and apparently have been typed on the original typescript which has been forwarded to the Office of the Chief of Military History. Shortage of time prevents request for a translation of that page, but reference is made thereto for clarification of this sentence.

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Branch, and their media for executing their responsibilities, were the same as mentioned under Section B.

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D. The Chief Infantry Officer in the OKH (Army High Command)

It became apparent in the course of the war that the Chief Infantry Officer attached to the Army Commander-in-Chief should not confine his activities to the Field Army, but should exert a direct influence upon the infantry of the Replacement Army and its schools. Repeated requests were made for the integration under an Inspector General of Infantry of all pertinent agencies of the Replacement Field Armies. Finally, after overcoming great obstacles, the authority of the Chief Infantry Officer was extended in December 1944 to include the Replacement Army through his subordination to both the Chief of the Army General Staff and the Commanding General of the Replacement Army.

This position bore the title of "Chief Infantry Officer in the OKH (Army High Command)", and the Chief Infantry Officer now became the infantry adviser to both the Chief of the Army General Staff and the Commanding General of the Replacement Army. The Inspector of Infantry, the Infantry Branch, and all infantry schools in the Replacement Army were placed under the Chief Infantry Officer in the OKH. Through this measure responsibility for all infantry matters, whether of the Field or Replacement Army, were placed in one hand.

The Infantry Branch of the General Army Office came under the Chief Infantry Officer in the OKH as a working staff (rear echelon), and was expended by the establishment of an office to draft regulations. The authority of the Infantry Inspector was extended in that all infantry schools were placed under him. The organization and chain of command

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are shown in the appendix. In practice this unfortunately belated arrangement did not take full effect, since the collapsing fronts of 1945 entailed frequent transfer of parts of the staff and made cooperation with the organization impossible.

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E. General Considerations

This section reveals some of the many thoughts and problems with which the top-level representation of the infantry concerned itself in looking toward a continued modern development. At the beginning of the war the infantry was equipped with rifle model 98 as its basic arm. The Infantry Inspector had requested a semiautomatic rifle of the same caliber (7.9 mm) several years earlier. The Army Ordnance Office developed several models, none of which, however, offered a satisfactory solution because of weight and strong recoil resulting from heavier powder charges. Since the lightest possible hand weapon was in demand, these developments resulted in nothing more than a new model 98 with shorter barrel and lighter weight.

However, research work along this line continued, resulting in 1943 in the semiautomatic rifle model 43 which was introduced for the sharp-shooters of the infantry. This solution did not satisfy the basic problem, and work was continued on an automatic rifle suggested by the Army Ordnance Office, which would be capable of a fairly accurate single shot over distances of 400 to 600 meters, and using a short cartridge with a smaller powder charge. After a demonstration in the spring of 1942, this weapon, which resembled a machine pistol, had been rejected by the Commander-in-Chief of the Wehrmacht although the Chief Infantry Officer and the Infantry Branch had asked for its adoption. The reason given for its rejection was that it would require two different kinds of ammunition (long and short cartridge) for the hand weapons of the infantry. The weapon was further developed by the Army Ordnance Office, and when front line troops began to clamor for such a weapon,

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the Chief Infantry Officer succeeded in having it sent on trial to a few regiments. All units engaged in the test expressed a favorable opinion of the weapon and the reports advocated its introduction, but not until 1944 was the introduction approved and the weapon adopted as "assault rifle 44" in the equipment of the infantry. Thus the infantryman -- unfortunately a year late -- was given a weapon that was light and easy to handle, with which he could fire both single shots and short bursts up to a distance of 400 meters, and which was to supplant the model 98.

The introduction of this weapon meant a considerable increase in the fighting power of the infantryman. The light machine gun was retained in the infantry company, since its strong fire power was indispensable by virtue of its great moral effect and accuracy. The adoption of the assault rifle 44 necessitated a reorganization within the infantry company. The platoons of the infantry company were called assault platoons, and were composed of two assault sections and a light machine gun section. The latter included two light machine guns from each platoon and three rifle grenadiers, while the third light machine gun of the assault platoons constituted a materiel reserve. With the introduction of the assault gun 44, the bayonets carried by the infantry were abolished.

Many years before the war the Infantry Inspector asked for a standard machine gun usable as both a light and a heavy machine gun. The result was the development of the light weight, air-cooled machine gun 34 with a thick-walled barrel using rifle 98 ammunition, and which by 1938 had

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still not overcome all its early defects. A light metal carriage had been developed for use as a heavy machine gun. The high moral effect of the rate of fire of this gun resulted in a demand for a further increase in speed, but since such an increase was unattainable with the machine gun 34, the substantially simpler, safer, and more economical machine gun 42, with cyclic rate of fire of 1,500 shots per minute, was given preference. All units were equipped with this weapon, which was generally favored by the troops.

Until 1940 the infantry had only the 37-mm antitank gun for antitank defense. Since its penetration was too small, work was begun on a 50-mm gun, and some units were equipped with it, but at the beginning of the Russian Campaign it became evident that it had no effect upon the completely unexpected model T-34 Russian tanks. 75-mm antitank guns were speedily developed and by the middle of 1942 the antitank companies of the infantry each received a platoon of three 75-mm guns. The fear that tanks might reach the foremost infantry lines without having been destroyed led to a demand for the introduction of antitank weapons in the hands of the infantry. Initially the men in front line trenches received hard-core (tungsten) rifle and machine gun ammunition for use against tanks. Since the penetration of this ammunition was too small, the Panzerfaust * was introduced, it being easy to handle, light, effective, and easy to manufacture. This was followed by the Panzerschreck **, caliber 80 mm (also called "stove pipe"), which was accepted as one of

* Recoilless antitank grenade and launcher, both expendable.

** German version of the Bazooka.

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the best antitank weapons. All infantry divisions activated in 1944 had antitank companies equipped with this weapon.

A continuous demand of the Infantry Inspector in peacetime was the equipment of infantry with light and easy-to-operate high-angle guns, with which otherwise screened targets could be hit effectively without endangering friendly troops. The Inspector suggested the introduction of mortars, and developments along with this line included a 50-mm and an 81-mm mortar. Rifle companies were equipped with three light (50 mm) mortars, and the machine gun companies in the battalions with six medium (81 mm) mortars each. A justifiable desire of the field units to abolish the 50-mm mortar because of its ineffectiveness led to the introduction of the rifle grenade. Mortar research produced the wartime development of the 120-mm mortar, which was introduced as part of the equipment of newly activated mortar battalions.

The infantry gun company, with six light infantry guns (75 mm), received an additional heavy infantry gun platoon (150 mm), which proved very effective during the war. The intention of the Infantry Inspector to dispense entirely with the light gun and to give each gun company six heavy guns could not be accomplished due to manufacturing difficulties, which favored the manufacture of weapons for other arms during the last years of the war.

In regard to the signal equipment of the infantry, it became apparent that the complaints from the field that the portable radio sets were too

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heavy were justified. Only in the last years of the war was it possible to equip the infantry with a suitable light radiotelephone.

During the war it was found that the infantryman made little use of his hand weapons owing to the numerous automatic weapons with which units were equipped. Even sharpshooting was avoided in the belief that single shots might reveal positions or draw return fire. But at the Eastern Front it had been observed that Russian sharpshooter battalions distributed in groups along the front caused major casualties to the Germans. Sharpshooter training was started to remedy the situation and training courses were set up to which the infantry of the Field Army sent specially picked riflemen for training in firing out of concealment or from observation posts. As a weapon, the sharpshooters received the semi-automatic rifle with a four power telescopic sight, which were taken to the front upon the termination of training. The Replacement Army also sent men to these courses, who either joined the Field Army or were put into newly activated units. As an encouragement and reward for a specified confirmed number of killed enemy combatants, the sharpshooter was awarded the sharpshooter's badge, which was to distinguish him from other riflemen, and special leave was granted for good performance. The infantry companies had six sharpshooters, usually employed in pairs.

A source of great concern to the Chief Infantry Officer was the steady decline of the fighting power of the infantry. For the most part this was due to the length of the war, which caused the quality of infantry replacements to deteriorate constantly. Owing to the short training period in the Replacement Army, these replacements did not always

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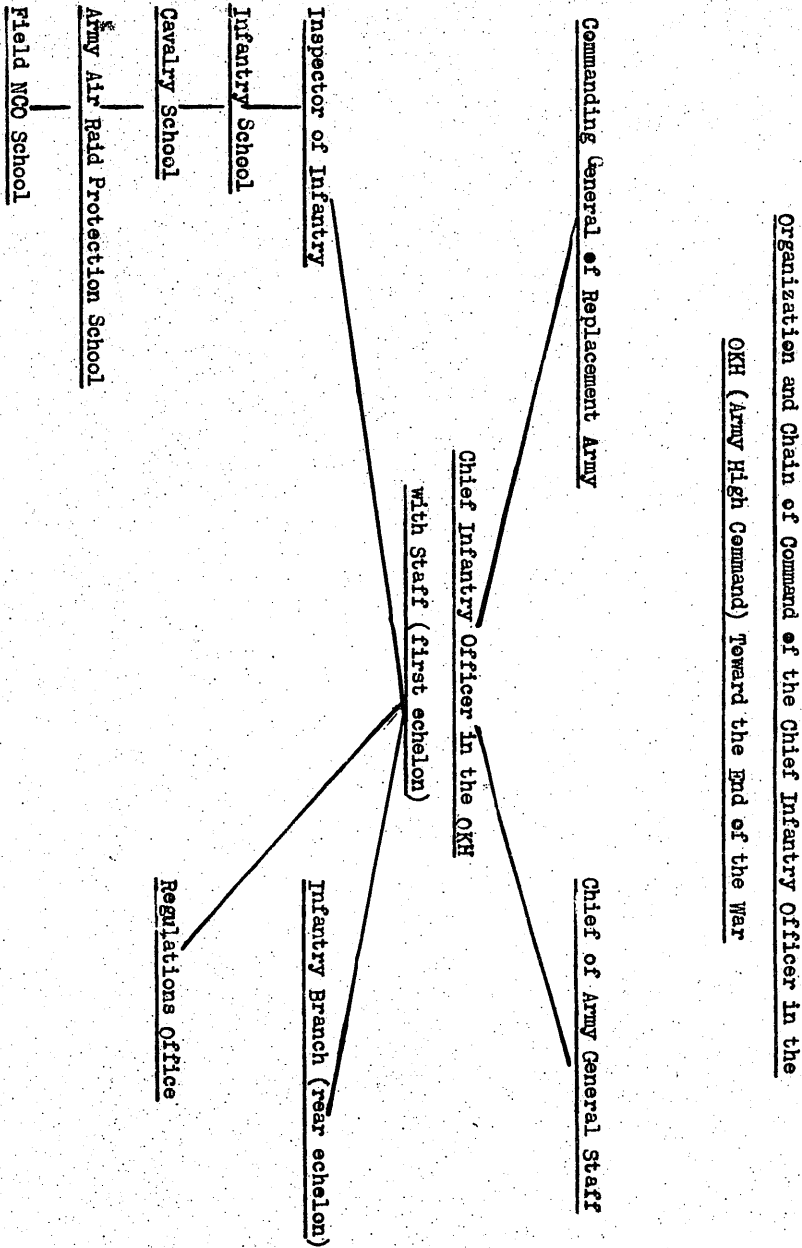
reach the desired standard and reached the front inadequately prepared. German volunteers enlisted for service with the panzer troops, the Luftwaffe, or motorized units, but scarcely a volunteer came to the infantry. The call for volunteers through lectures, training films, demonstrations, or other propagands did not meet with the desired success, and finally an order was issued whereby the recruiting district headquarters were directed to select infantry replacements from the registrants who were mentally and physically qualified. In addition, the artillery and the signal troops, which had few losses, were screened with the result that younger and better men were sent to the infantry.

Instead of filling up the depleted ranks of old and battle-tried infantry divisions with new replacements, complete new infantry divisions were continually formed on Hitler's personal orders. This procedure did not even permit men who recovered from their wounds to return to their old units, although most of them were as eager to do as their units were to have them back. Particularly through the formation of numerous new SS units the infantry lost the type of men it so urgently needed. All the objections raised relative to these new formations were ignored at the top levels. A suggestion to draft infantry replacements from the ground personnel of the Luftwaffe precipitated the formation of twenty Luftwaffe field divisions. Thus the requests and suggestions of the Chief Infantry Officer for the improvement of infantry replacements met with very limited success.

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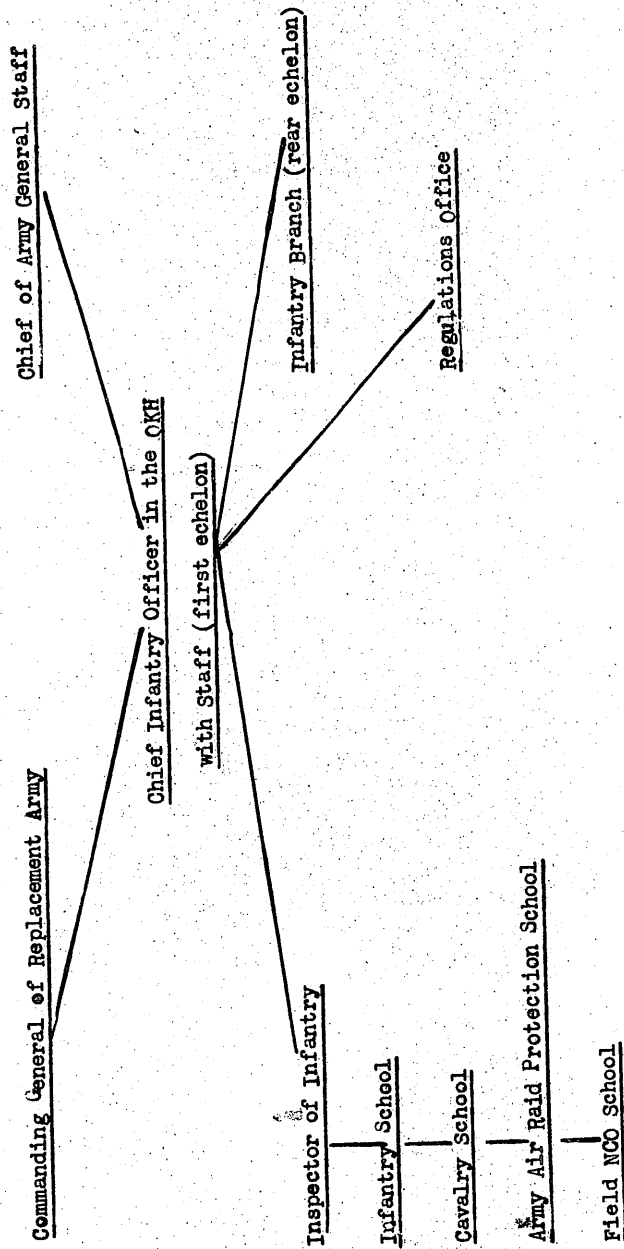
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Organization and Chain of Command of the Chief Infantry Officer in the

OKH (Army High Command) toward the End of the War



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Requests for preferential treatment of infantry in relation to other arms resulted in increased awards, priority in promotions, more frequent leaves, extra food, and special post exchange and tobacco rations "for fighting infantrymen only". As recognition of the special achievements of fighting infantrymen, the Infantry Assault Badge, The Close Combat Clasp, and the Sharpshooter's Badge were established.

The problem of increased motorization of the infantry continuously harassed the Chief Infantry Officer. Even though further motorized divisions were added after the Western Campaign to the four that had been established in peacetime, the requirements were not satisfied. The formation of numerous new SS units, Luftwaffe units, and those of other arms swallowed up the motor vehicles rolling out of the plants. All efforts toward a further motorization of the infantry came to naught through shortages in material.

In conclusion it can be said that once again the German infantryman in every situation and in every theater of war loyally fulfilled the demands placed upon him to the very end, in spite of the enemy's great material superiority, the almost superhuman hardships he had to endure, and the inadequacy of replacements.

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